

Applicant : Mark A. Ferguson et al.
Appln. No. : 10/678,894
Page : 2

In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (original) An apparatus for simultaneously attaching a plurality of articles to a foldable strip shaped merchandiser, comprising:

(a) a strip shaped element having an undulating cross sectional configuration comprising a series of folds, said strip comprising intermediate segments located between sequential folds in the strip shaped element, said intermediate segments comprising connection means located thereon; and

(b) a detachable handle contacting said series of folds at one or more points of contact.

2. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said points of contact are frangible.

3. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said apparatus is a unitary component.

4. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said apparatus has been formed by injection molding.

5. (original) The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said apparatus is made from material selected from the group consisting of polyethylene, styrene, acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene and polypropylene.

6. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said handle comprises an elongated section having two ends and a terminal section perpendicularly abutting one of said ends.

Applicant : Mark A. Ferguson et al.
Appln. No. : 10/678,894
Page : 3

7. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said handle comprises an elongated section having two ends and a midsection located between said ends, said midsection located on the side of said handle opposite said points of contact.

8. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said strip shaped element comprises two ends and at least one of said ends comprises a means for securing said strip to a support structure.

9. (original) The apparatus of claim 8 wherein said means for securing said strip to a support structure comprises a hook.

10. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said intermediate segments comprise connection segments and guiding segments and wherein at least one of said connection segments comprises at least one of said connection means.

11. (original) The apparatus of claim 10 wherein said connection means comprises a tab having a proximate end secured to an intermediate segment and a distal end extending from said intermediate segment.

12. (original) The apparatus of claim 11 wherein said tab and said intermediate segment define a partially enclosed cavity.

13. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim [[10]] 11 wherein at least one of said guiding segments comprises a curved portion having a concave surface and a convex surface.

14. (original) The apparatus of claim 13 wherein the shortest distance from said curved portion's convex surface to the closest connection segment is less than the shortest distance from said tab's distal end to said connection segment.

Applicant : Mark A. Ferguson et al.
Appln. No. : 10/678,894
Page : 4

15. (original) A process for attaching a plurality of display articles to an undulating strip shaped merchandiser, said process comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing an apparatus comprising a handle and an undulating strip member secured to one another, said strip comprising a plurality of releasable connection means located along the length of said strip;
- (b) providing a plurality of display articles, each article comprising at least one releasable engagement means;
- (c) contacting said apparatus' strip to said plurality of display articles, said strip's connection means engaging said display articles' engagement means and releasably securing the display articles to the strip; and
- (d) separating said handle from said strip.

16. (currently amended) The process of claim 15, wherein, in step (a), said strip comprises a plurality of folds, located along the length of said strip, and intermediate segments located between sequential folds in said strip, said intermediate segments comprising at least one connection segment comprising at least one connection means, said intermediate segments further comprising at least one guiding segment located adjacent said connection segment; and in step (c), prior to said connection means engaging said display articles' engagement means, each of said display articles contacts [[a]] the at least one guiding segment and [[a]] the at least one connection segment.

17. (original) The process of claim 16, wherein said guiding segment comprises a curved portion having a concave surface and a convex surface, and said connection segment comprises a tab having a proximate end secured to said connection segment and a distal end extending from said connection segment towards said guiding segment, wherein said display articles contact said curved portions' convex surfaces before said tabs engage the display articles' engagement means.

Applicant : Mark A. Ferguson et al.
Appln. No. : 10/678,894
Page : 5

18. (original) The process of claim 17, wherein said convex surfaces laterally displace said display articles toward said connection segments.

19. (currently amended) The process of claim 18, wherein each of said display articles comprise an opening therethrough and at least one of said connection segments comprises [[a]] the tab extending through at least one of said openings.

20. (original) The process of claim 15, wherein during the step of contacting said apparatus' strip to said plurality of display articles, said apparatus' strip connection means simultaneously contacts said display articles' engagement means.

21. (original) The process of claim 15, wherein said strip is secured to said handle at two or more points of contact.

22. (original) The process of claim 21, wherein said step of separating said handle from said strip member comprises breaking the points of contact that secure the handle to the strip member.

23. (currently amended) The process of claim 15, wherein, prior to providing said apparatus comprising [[a]] said handle and strip, said handle and strip are formed as a unitary member.

24. (currently amended) The process of claim 15, wherein, prior to providing said apparatus comprising [[a]] said handle and strip, said handle and strip are formed as separate components and then secured to one another.

25. (original) The process of claim 15, wherein said strip member's connection means comprises a tab having a proximate end secured to said strip member and a distal end extending from said strip member.

Applicant : Mark A. Ferguson et al.
Appln. No. : 10/678,894
Page : 6

26. (original) The process of claim 25, wherein said tab and said strip member cooperatively define a partially enclosed cavity.
27. (original) The process of claim 26, wherein said strip's connection means employs said tab and cavity to suspend said article from said strip member.
28. (original) The process of claim 15, wherein each of said display articles comprises a planar component defining an opening therethrough.
29. (original) The process of claim 28, wherein said distal end of said tab extends through said opening thereby releasably securing said display article to said strip member.
30. (original) The process of claim 28, wherein said planar component comprises at least one edge defining the perimeter of said planar component and said opening is located proximate said edge.
31. (original) The process of claim 15 wherein said step of contacting said apparatus to said display articles comprises moving said apparatus toward said display articles and then moving said apparatus away from said display articles.
32. (original) The process of claim 15, wherein said step of providing a plurality of display articles comprises aligning said separating said display articles to correspond with the distance between said strip member's connection means located along the length of said strip.
33. (original) The process of claim 15, wherein said step of separating said handle from said strip member comprises releasing said handle from said strip member.

Applicant : Mark A. Ferguson et al.
Appln. No. : 10/678,894
Page : 7

34. (original) The process of claim 15, wherein said handle comprises a linear elongated portion that contacts said strip member.

35. (original) The process of claim 34, wherein said linear portion comprises protrusions that extend from said linear portion toward said strip member.

36. (original) The process of claim 15, wherein one end of said strip member comprises a means for securing said strip to a support structure.